

The Hour

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NEWS-KEY

Ku Klux Klan in Trouble.....	page 1
Spring Street-Riots Planned by Frontists.....	" 2
Almazan's Hair-Splitting Alibi Ready for Use.....	" 3
"St. Patrick's Day" Message from Nazis to U. S.....	" 4

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MURDER IN GEORGIA BRINGS INVESTIGATION OF KLAN

Night-Riders Suspected of Flogging Man to Death - Anti-Union Activities of Klansmen Probed Again

While resting on the laurels of the anti-Jewish, anti-Negro, and anti-Catholic "successes" it claimed in New Jersey, New York and the Middle West (see *The Hour* for January 6 and 27, February 3, 10 and 24, and March 2), Ku Klux Klan experienced a rude shock of reverses in its own home territories of Georgia and the Carolinas. The shock came in the wise of the South Fulton County grand jury investigation near the city of Atlanta into the death of Ike Gaston, a white barber of the suburbs. The investigation implicated members of the Ku Klux Klan, despite the denials attempted by James A. Colescott, Imperial Wizard of the night-riders' organization, from his vacationing pleasures at Miami Beach, Florida.

Deputy Sheriffs Admit Membership in Klan

Gaston's bruised body was found early this month in the woods of South Fulton County, Georgia. The investigation proved that several months ago Gaston had been visited and threatened by a group of robed and masked men who said they objected to his habits of life. Early in March the barber was kidnapped from East Point, in the suburbs, and flogged to death. During the investigation of the murder by the grand jury, W. W. Scarborough, a deputy sheriff of the county, admitted that he was the Klan's Exalted Cyclops at East Point, that two of his fellow-deputies were also Klansmen, and that these and other night-riders went around the suburbs of East Point, College Park, Egan Park, and Hapeville, burning fiery crosses and threatening various citizens in a crusade for "better living habits."

Klan's Campaign Against C.I.O.

These suburbs happen to be of industrial character, and the Klan campaign here, as well as in the textile regions of the Carolinas, is coupled with the Klan's and other reactionaries' hatred for the C.I.O. and its unionizing activity. Certain Klansmen openly boasted that some industrialists were in favor of vigilante activities by the night-riders, and that the persons whipped or driven out of

their homes were mainly "labor agitators." A complaint by union officials that the National Labor Relations Act was being violated by Klansmen resulted in the sending by the Department of Justice of FBI men into Anderson, South Carolina (see The Hour for February 10, page 4), but lately the FBI men returned with a report indicating that there was no violation of United States law. The murder of Gaston in Georgia revived the issue, however. Men and women, who had been flogged and had feared to talk, came forth with their testimony, and now the Federal authorities once more are joining forces with the local investigators probing the outrages.

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CHRISTIAN FRONT WILL RESUME STREET MEETINGS

Cassidy's Successors Plan "Bad Riots When Good Weather Comes"

The Christian Front will hold meetings on the streets of New York this coming spring and summer despite the reported determination of the city authorities to prevent such gatherings. This was the message of Joseph Nolen, a leader of the Front, to some 250 men and women present at a recent meeting of the organization in Brooklyn, among whom the rumor had been spreading for some time that they were to engineer "bad riots when good weather comes."

Nolen is rapidly assuming the place of John F. Cassidy, who together with sixteen other Frontists is now awaiting trial on charges of plotting to overthrow the United States Government and therefore cannot lead his followers as before. Nolen is also replacing John Scanlan, who has been criticized by the Coughlinites because, while willing to speak at indoor meetings of the Front, he was conspicuously absent from the street meetings. Presiding at the recent indoor meeting, Nolen made a point of introducing each orator with a remark that the man will also address street-corner meetings when the time comes. He omitted this remark while introducing Scanlan. (John Scanlan is the nephew of Patrick J. Scanlan, who is managing editor of the Brooklyn Tablet, the Coughlinite paper. See The Hour for February 24, page 2.)

Front Reorganized

The Front in Brooklyn has undergone a certain process of reorganization since the arrest of the seventeen members by the Federal authorities. Preparations for street-corner meetings and riots have played an important role in the reorganization. Since early March various committees of the Front have been meeting every Wednesday night in Prospect Hall, Brooklyn. James E. Ginty is in charge of membership files and of the issuance of the 1940 cards. Jess Bennett is getting ready to take immediate charge of street meetings (under Nolen's supervision, of course) John Scanlan, not being shelved altogether, is relegated to handle publicity. Albert Gunnison is busy talking and working on the problem of unification of the various fascist organizations in New York and in the country at large.

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ALMAZAN PREPARED ALIBI FOR UPRISING IN INTERVIEW LAST AUGUST

A former correspondent for The Hour in Mexico, now in the United States, confirms that General Almazan's plans for an uprising are of long standing. In an exclusive and hitherto unpublished interview with the Mexican presidential candidate given last August, The Hour's reporter asked General Andreu Almazan if he would abide by the decision of an election. The general assumed a very serious air and carefully phrased his answer: "I will abide by the decision of a FREE election." He had previously denied with vigor any intention to lead an armed uprising if he were to lose in the elections of July, 1940. More recently Almazan has stated that if his rival General Manuel Avila Camacho were illegally elected, he, Almazan, would lead a movement to upset the verdict of this election. Almazan's assertions closely resemble the arguments of Generalissimo Francisco Franco to justify the fascist rebellion of 1936 against the legally elected Republican government of Spain.

Connections with Calles and Nazis

Almazan also denied, to The Hour's correspondent, having any connections whatever to exiled, ex-president Plutarco Calles of Mexico. But when confronted with the knowledge of the frequent visits to Almazan's headquarters of Calles' son, General Andreu Almazan stuttered and said: "Well, yes, I have been host to Calles' son, but only for social reasons, not political." Meanwhile Calles senior, now residing in San Diego, California, is prime mover of the strings of a wide conspiracy to supplant the present government in Mexico. These strings connect Plutarco Calles to certain American reactionary, pro-fascist groups, to the Almazanistas in Mexico, and to Nazi agents.

The former president of Mexico has publicly praised Hitler's Mein Kampf. Calles was allowed to leave Mexico in safety, only due to the magnanimous action of President Lazaro Cardenas, who had adequate grounds to suspect Calles of plotting a revolution. When he arrived in the United States, Calles was seen to be closely hugging under his arm a copy of the Nazi "bible" written by Adolf Hitler.

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"VICTORY IN THE EAST" FOR AMERICAN CONSUMPTION

On the heels of the mimeographed letter slandering the Negro race (see The Hour for March 2, page 4), the Nazi propagandist bureau in Hamburg is sending to a number of Americans a lavishly printed book entitled Der Sieg im Osten (Victory in the East), describing in word and photograph "the fight of the German people's army in Poland." With the book comes a brief pamphlet giving the text and picture-captions both in English and French translation. The English of it is quite clumsy, falling short of the style to which Americans are accustomed in their popular literature.

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NAZIS ADDRESS "ST. PATRICK'S DAY MESSAGE" TO IRISH-AMERICANS

Try to Win Their Sympathy by Denying Anti-Church Campaign in Reich

Timed to arrive in the United States on or about St. Patrick's Day (March 17), a mimeographed four-page letter reached many Americans from the Nazi propaganda headquarters in Hamburg headed by Theodor Kesselmeier. The letter is entitled "An Appeal for Fair Play! An open letter to our American friends of Irish descent." It tries to win the goodwill of Irish-Americans for Hitler and his henchmen by presenting many and various arguments in favor of the Nazis. Aware of the deep religious feeling of many Irish-Americans, the Nazi propagandist attempts to deny the anti-church excesses of the Hitler machine. He writes: "I assure you dear sir that these accusations are slanders intended to set the God-fearing Irish-American population against us. Every foreign visitor to Germany, and I have many calling on me, is free to convince himself of the fact that the Church is not persecuted in Germany, that the churches are open and crowded every Sunday to their full capacities. Many churches, abbeys and cloisters are being newly erected with the friendly help of our government, and countless buildings sacred to our Catholic population have been most generously renovated." Not a word is said about the numerous imprisonments, tortures and killings of Catholic and non-Catholic clergymen by the Nazis throughout the Reich and the territories it has seized. The author of the letter also tries to flatter the Irish by writing that the Nazis fully sympathize with them and their "upright and dignified sense of justice and desire for freedom."

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ALBERT BUSHNELL HART PAYS TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM E. DODD'S MEMORY

In a letter to the editor of The Hour, under the date of March 11, Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, dean of American historians, writes:

Dear Sir:-

Your article in The Hour, February 17, 1940, announcing the death of William E. Dodd has reached me. It was my fortune to come into both personal and intellectual relations with something like ten thousand students. Among them there was a very much smaller group with whom I formed much closer and what proved to be life-long friendships. Among these students and coadjutors and personal and literary friends I counted Dodd very high. He was a good student of high character and a man of brains. I was on very much closer terms with him than with most of my students and knew something of his promise in life. It seems unaccountable that I should outlive so many of my one-time students, but in the course of many years of my service, I came into closer personal relations than might be expected in a great university like Harvard.

Thank you for notifying me in this way of the loss to Dodd's friends in Cambridge and the multitude of people whom he reached and influenced.

Cordially yours,
(Signed) Albert Bushnell Hart

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Through the Hourglass

BY MICHAEL SAYERS

CRISIS ON COUGHLIN'S "LINE"

Before September last, there was no doubt at all about Father Coughlin's political "line."

It was traced quite clearly from points German and Italian. In case we weren't sure, the radio prophet emphasized many times in the pages of his magazine, Social Justice, that Hitler had succeeded in bringing the German people "out of their 15 year-old depression." He wrote: "It should never be forgotten that the Rome-Berlin Axis is the great political rampart against the spread of Communism. As such, the Rome-Berlin Axis is serving Christianity in a peculiarly important manner." Many of Father Coughlin's speeches were almost indistinguishable from those of Doctor Joseph Goebbels.

Since September, however, some confusion has arisen. Coughlin's "line" is unclear, devious, uncertain. Old ties with the Axis maintain a fairly steady anti-democratic attitude, blatant antagonism to Great Britain, and anti-Semitism, now more or less veiled and subtle. But the old assurance is gone.

To repudiate Germany altogether is impossible, in view of past friendship. James Strachey Barnes, writing in Social Justice, makes this notable statement: "All the good that can safely be said for a German victory is that it would release in Germany the forces of Christianity for the work of transforming Nazism into something better."

However, a more "tangible" hope "lies in the real victors being the neutrals and, in particular, the western Christian powers: Italy, Spain, Portugal and Ireland." Italy and Spain are openly Fascist states; Portugal and Ireland are partly colonial, partly dictatorships, under British domination. Clearly, there is nothing "clear" about the new Coughlin line on international affairs.

Coughlin's extreme and remarkable reticence on the Irish question raises an interesting point. For example, although Social Justice shrieks with indignation about the infamies of the British in India and in South Africa, not a word is said on the Irish question -- and this in spite of the fact that Coughlinism has been strong among the Irish both here and in Eire.

Last year this writer had occasion to report in The Hour (July 15, 1939) that Coughlinism had passed through Irish-American circles back to Ireland itself, where it had influenced certain elements within the Irish Republican Army in favor of Nazism. Today, with the crisis in Eire, a reverse process is taking place. The Irish nationalist movement in Eire -- with its militantly republican and democratic mass base -- is actually influencing Coughlin's Irish followers in America. And by directing their attention towards the national and democratic Ireland, it is, oddly enough, estranging them from the Fascist demagoguery with which Coughlin originally won them. Irish-Americans are beginning to realize that anti-Semitism will play no part in the liberation of Ireland.

Father Coughlin has played upon the warm partisan sympathies and the prejudices of the Irish in this country. Coughlinism in many towns has made the Irish-born its tool but now the tool is turning in Coughlin's hands. The Irish are getting off the Coughlin boat.

A crisis in Coughlinism is at hand.

March 23, 1940

Richard A. ...
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